

REMARKS

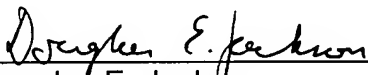
By this Amendment, the claims have been rewritten to reduce the multiple dependencies and to place the claims in better conformance with US practice.

Further and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

STITES & HARBISON, PLLC

Date: 2/22/05



Douglas E. Jackson
Registration No. 28518

1199 North Fairfax Street, Suite 900 - Alexandria, Virginia 22314 - (703) 739-4900

ATTACHMENT A
Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (original) A method of treating meat comprising a meat treatment step in which new meat surfaces are generated, characterized in that said step is carried out in an atmosphere comprising CO₂ and substantially free from O₂.
2. (original) A method according to claim 1 in which the atmosphere is provided by gas which has been sterilized by UV irradiation.
3. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ wherein the meat is maintained in the temperature range -2 to 0°C.
4. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the carbon dioxide concentration is selected so that the meat surfaces have pH values of 3.5 or less.
5. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 including a plurality of meat treatment steps in at least one of which new meat surfaces are generated, all of said steps being carried out in said atmosphere.
6. (original) A method according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 including a step of decontaminating processing equipment that comes into contact with said meat by treatment with said atmosphere and/or by UV irradiation.
7. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the meat is processed in the substantial absence of light.

8. (currently amended) Apparatus for carrying out a method according to any preceding claim 1 comprising a treatment chamber containing means for generating new meat surfaces, and a source of CO₂ coupled to the chamber.